



Fernald
Preserve

PRESERVE HIGHLIGHTS

VOL. 2 | ISSUE 3

Spotlight

The Fernald Preserve, which is located on 1,050 acres in northwest Hamilton County, was established following the cleanup and ecological restoration of the former Fernald uranium foundry.

The \$14 million ecological restoration incorporated native plants and grasses that were identified in an 1819 land survey. The current landscape features 400 acres of woodlots, 327 acres of prairie, 140 acres of open water and wetlands, and 33 acres of savanna. A diverse array of wildlife is already well established at the preserve.

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November 19
Community Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Fernald Preserve Visitors Center
7400 Willey Road
Harrison, Ohio 45030

Platinum



The U.S. Green Building Council has announced that the Fernald Preserve Visitors Center has received a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum rating. This is the highest level achievable for the design, construction, and operation of energy-efficient and environmentally responsible green buildings. The Visitors Center is the first building in Ohio and only the second Department of Energy building to receive LEED platinum certification. The 10,500-square-foot Visitors Center is a redesigned warehouse that includes an exhibit area, which tells the story of the Fernald site, a resource room, a meeting room, and office space.

The LEED rating system is the nationally accepted benchmark for developing high-performance sustainable buildings and was developed by leading experts in the construction industry to promote green buildings.



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**Did you
know...**

Many guests to the Fernald Preserve Visitors Center during the debut weekend noticed a Luna moth on one of the atrium windows. Adult Luna moths do not have mouth parts and emerge only to mate. Sightings of Luna moths are relatively rare since the adults live for only 1 week.

Legacy Management Goals

Goal 1

Protect human health and the environment through effective and efficient long-term surveillance and maintenance.

Goal 2

Preserve, protect, and make accessible legacy records and information.

Goal 3

Support an effective and efficient work force structured to accomplish Departmental missions and assure contractor worker pension and medical benefits.

Goal 4

Manage legacy land and assets, emphasizing protective real and personal property reuse and disposition.

Goal 5

Improve program effectiveness through sound management.



Legacy Management's Mission:

To manage the Department's post-closure responsibilities and ensure the future protection of human health and the environment. Legacy Management has control and custody for legacy land, structures, and facilities and is responsible for maintaining them at levels consistent with Departmental long-term plans.



Meeting the Mission

Goal 5: At the Fernald Preserve, it is the responsibility of the Department of Energy's Office of Legacy Management (LM) to manage the site's resources in a manner that will allow the restored land to achieve its full potential as both wildlife habitat and recreational space. Visitors to the Fernald Preserve now have access to a network of trails for viewing the site's flora and fauna. Over 3 miles of trails are now available, with the recent addition of the Shingle Oak Trail near the Visitors Center. During this period of trail development, individuals and groups can request escorted tours to view other areas of the site. Strategically placed observation areas have also been added to enhance the wildlife-viewing experience. Please follow our site guidelines by staying on the trails. This will help our plantings to grow to maturity and prevent wildlife from being disturbed.

Fun Fact


North America's largest rodent has taken up residence at the Fernald Preserve. American beavers build dams in flowing water and lodges in ponds, and once they are fully grown, they can weigh 60 pounds. Nature's most prolific dam builders, beavers carry mud and stones in their forepaws and twigs in their teeth, and can hold their breath for as long as 45 minutes. The largest known beaver dam is over one-half mile long, 14 feet high, and 23 feet deep.

Nature Nook



Northern Leopard Frog *Lithobates pipiens*

A special frog has recently been identified at the Fernald Preserve, and is cause for celebration. The northern leopard frog was once abundant in Ohio. Today, habitat loss has resulted in declining populations across many parts of the state. The frog at the Fernald Preserve is among the first seen in Hamilton County in approximately 20 years. In the past 2 years, they have been seen at the Shaker Trace Wetland at Miami Whitewater Forest and on the Ohio-Indiana border just north of the Ohio River.

The northern leopard frog is large (2 to 3.5 inches long) and can be identified by two to three rows of irregular spots that are found between two light ridges (dorsolateral folds) on its back. Its belly is always white. These frogs can be found in wet meadows and on the edges of streams and lakes. They are sometimes called “meadow frogs” because they can be found in fields far from water. 



Visitors Center

The public received its first views of the Fernald Preserve and its Visitors Center during a community meeting on August 20. Nearly 200 people attended the meeting and toured the site and building. An Associated Press article printed prior to the debut was carried by over 140 outlets including those in Europe and Asia.

Project personnel from the S.M. Stoller Corporation, prime contractor to the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Legacy Management, managed the construction of the Visitors Center and continues with day-to-day operations of the building. Usage of the Visitors Center has ranged from quiet reflective moments in the exhibit area to gatherings with over 120 people in the Community Meeting Room. The Visitors Center is open Wednesday through Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Individual Effort


Chuck White -
Environmental Scientist

Chuck White has seen a lot at Fernald. He has worked there since 1992, and knows a lot about the site's long history—from its cleanup to the completion of the Visitors Center—firsthand. That makes him a valuable asset to the Stoller team as it carries out the Legacy Management mission.

That mission includes taking environmental samples at and near the Fernald Preserve. As an environmental scientist, Chuck plays a big role in ensuring that those samples are processed correctly. “We do a lot of sampling here,” says Chuck, “and I’m in charge of interfacing with our off-site and on-site laboratories regarding analyses. I’m the liaison with the labs, telling them what we need to do and making sure we’re getting the right stuff.”

Of the kinds of samples taken at Fernald

(groundwater, surface water, air, and sediment), it's the groundwater samples that have the greatest impact on the restoration of the Great Miami Aquifer. Eighty percent of samples taken at the site are groundwater samples, which constitute the biggest component of assessments at Fernald. But the remaining 20 percent is significant, too. When all is said and done, an enormous amount of data needs to be interpreted and validated. “Every year, we do between 300 or 400 data packages,” says Chuck, “and we might have 20 or 30 samples in each package.”

When Chuck isn't overseeing sampling and analysis or working with the labs, he's helping to write documents, such as the *Legacy Management and Institutional Controls Plan*. His favorite part of composing documents is getting to work closely with his colleagues. “You're all working toward one goal. Someone helps you out, and you help them out,” he says. “It's rewarding knowing we've put out something good and done it in a collaborative way.” 



PRESERVE HIGHLIGHTS



As a community asset, the Fernald Preserve will foster wildlife habitat and provide educational opportunities through environmental stewardship.

Community Relations

Since the Fernald Preserve's debut on August 20, the community has been enjoying the site trails, wildlife, and reflective moments in the exhibit area. The Visitors Center has also been well used by groups from senior centers, schools, and a variety of organizations such as the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District, the American Society of Safety Engineers, and Scout groups.

The Fernald Preserve maintains an active public outreach program with schools, local elected officials, conservation organizations, and other community groups. If you or your organization would like to learn more about the Fernald Preserve, tour the site, or reserve the community meeting room, please contact Sue Walpole at (513) 648-4026.

Think Green

E-mail fernald@LM.doe.gov if you would like to receive this quarterly newsletter electronically. This newsletter is printed on recycled paper with environmentally friendly inks.